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Uribe Wins Appeal and Remains Free in Case Still Without Charges, Evidence

*Judicial irregularities and a star witness caught lying on the stand;
Case drawing international scrutiny*

An appeals judge this morning [upheld](#) the right of former Colombian President **Álvaro Uribe** to defend himself in freedom against a case where he still has not been charged with a crime. The judge said that arresting Uribe without any formal charges from the office of the Attorney General would seriously violate his fundamental rights.

The decision draws greater attention to the judicial irregularities that led to Uribe's arrest without charge on August 4, 2020, in a [politically motivated case](#) driven by the principal ally of the FARC in Colombia, Senator **Iván Cepeda**. The case originated from testimony against Uribe that Cepeda induced from an ex-paramilitary leader serving a long prison sentence in exchange for better conditions and [cash benefits](#) from an NGO linked to Cepeda. The witness, **Juan Guillermo Monsalve**, was later shown to have [lied multiple times in his testimony](#). The Attorney General's office raided and seized a sprawling ranch on 50 acres of rich farmland secretly belonging to Monsalve, linked to [unexplained financial transactions shortly after](#) he provided Cepeda the testimony. To this day, not a shred of material evidence has been presented to corroborate Monsalve's discredited testimony.

Repeated violations of due process in the run-up to Uribe's arrest without charge included unexplained financial associations between the investigative judge and Uribe's political adversaries, suppression of exculpatory evidence, [a falsified warrant](#) to tap his phone and transfer of irregular recordings to his case file [in violation of Article 29 of the Colombian Constitution](#). These violations have led important global human rights organizations to monitor the case, including the [Organization of American States \(OAS\)](#), the [Inter-Parliamentary Union \(IPU\)](#), and the [Human Rights Institute for Peace and Freedom \(HRI\)](#), an arm of the [World Jurist Association](#) that has [special consultative status with the United Nations](#). HRI [declared](#) it found evidence of an "arbitrary arrest" in the case.



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